

Steel Guitar Tablature Key

STANDARD STAFF

A standard treble clef is used to give information missing from the tablature staff—rhythm and note durations.

TABLATURE STAFF

Tablature is a way to graphically represent positions on the fretboard. Horizontal lines represent the strings and the numbers represent frets.

Play 1st string at the 7th fret.

Play 2nd string open.

Mixing fretted and open notes. Notes in parentheses are optional.

FINGERING

Pick single note runs using the thumb and the second or third finger. [T = thumb, V = finger]

LET RING

Pick the notes within the marking, letting all ring until the marking ends.

BAR PLUNGE

(1) Pick the note/chord a few frets above the indicated fret and slam the bar quickly down to that fret. (2) For added effect slam the bar one fret past the notated fret and bring the bar back up to that fret.

STRUM

Strum chord by raking up from bottom string with the thumb, and then finishing with the forefinger on the top string.

LAZY SLIDE

Pick the note (on the written beat) a fret below the indicated fret, then slide the bar at a steady rate to the indicated fret. A slow speed strengthens the effect.

NATURAL HARMONICS

Pick only open strings, muting the strings at the indicated frets with the tip of the left pinky.

SLIDE

Pick the first note at the indicated fret and then slide the bar to the next note without picking.

GRACE NOTE

Pick the note (ahead of the beat) a fret below the indicated fret, then whip the bar quickly to the indicated fret. The bar arrives on the beat.

PALM HARMONICS

With the bar at the notated fret, pick the string(s) with the thumb while lightly muting them with the edge of the right palm 12 frets above the bar.

HAMMER ON

Pick the open string then sound second note by placing bar at the indicated fret without picking.

FALL OFF

Pick the note at the indicated fret then drop the note a half step or more with the bar before muting the note.

HIGHER ORDER HARMONICS

Same as palm harmonics except you mute 7 frets up (2nd order) or 5 frets up (3rd order). The order is shown in parentheses.

PULL OFF

Pick the first note at the indicated fret and then sound the open note by lifting the bar off the string without picking.

HULA PICK

With thumb, pick the bottom note slightly ahead of the beat, then play the other note(s) on the beat.

FINGER HARMONIC SEQUENCE

With the bar at the notated fret, use a finger or knuckle to harmonic the notes, letting the notes ring together. Higher order harmonics appear in italics next to the fret number.

SLUR

Pick the first note and then move the bar toward the second note before picking it. Used to make a smooth connection between the notes.

TREMOLO

Alternate the notes in rapid succession for the duration indicated. If a chord is notated, alternate the bottom note with the rest of the chord.

PALM HARMONIC SEQUENCE

Play a series of palm harmonics with the bar at the notated frets. Higher order harmonics appear in italics next to the fret number.